

There will be a few final steps to take, a few final amendments to consider, but I hope my Republican colleagues have seen our commitment to developing, drafting, and perfecting this legislation in total concert with the other side of the aisle.

With cooperation from our Republican colleagues, we can finish the bill today, and I hope we do. That is our intention, because despite the lack of attention it has garnered from the press, the U.S. Innovation and Competition Act will be one of the most significant pieces of bipartisan legislation we pass in a very long time. It could be a moment in history that future generations look back on as a turning point for American leadership in the 21st century.

Everyone knows the Federal Government's commitment to science and technology has been slipping for decades. We have become complacent at the top of the global heap, and our position as the world's economic leader is teetering. We now spend less than 1 percent of our GDP on basic scientific research. The Chinese Communist Party, as a percentage, spends more than twice that. We have put ourselves in the very precarious position of potentially falling behind the rest of the world in technologies and industries that will define the next century. If that happens, the days of America leading the world in scientific innovation and the days of America being the leading economic and military power in the world may be over.

This is a moment when the U.S. Senate can arrest the decline and lay the foundation, instead, for another American century. That is why this is a moment in history that future generations could well look back on as a turning point for American leadership in the 21st century.

By investing in science and technology and shoring up critical industries like semiconductors, boosting our universities, laboratories, and businesses, we can keep America on top and outcompete the world in industries of the future. That is just what this legislation would do. Our two parties have worked very hard on it. I think we have made a number of notable improvements to the bill. It is time to move forward together and pass this bill.

JANUARY 6 COMMISSION

Mr. SCHUMER. Now, Madam President, on another matter that should also be just as bipartisan in the Senate: the Commission to investigate the January 6 attack on the Capitol.

We all know that January 6 was one of the lowest moments in our democracy and one of the lowest moments in the grand, grand history of our 200-and-some-odd-year experiment—noble experiment—in democracy. An outgoing President of the United States, fresh off an electoral defeat—a significant electoral defeat—did something that no

other President in recent history has done. Rather than accept the results of the election and support the peaceful transfer of power—a hallmark of our democracy that has inspired democracies all over the world—former President Trump unabashedly lied, repeatedly, about the results of the election and fomented an armed rebellion at the U.S. Capitol.

We are all witnesses to those events. We all heard the lies. We lived through their terrible consequences. Lest we forget, 140 police officers were injured in the attack, and 5 Americans would eventually lose their lives.

In the weeks since, faith in our elections has plummeted. More than half of the Republican Party now believes that the 2020 elections were rigged and that Joe Biden isn't the actual President of the United States. Republican State legislatures across the country, captured by Donald Trump's Big Lie, are tripping over themselves to restrict access to the ballot box. Arizona Republicans, in an "election audit," have been searching for traces of bamboo fibers in the 2020 ballots—chasing a bananas-crazy, rightwing internet conspiracy that China had ballots imported to tip the scales for Biden. That is how insane this has become—hunting for bamboo in ballots.

We need to put a stop to this cancer in the Republican Party. We need to stand up to the Big Lie. We must get at the truth and do everything in our power to restore Americans' faith in our elections and this grand, ongoing, noble experiment of democracy.

In that light, a national, bipartisan, independent Commission to report on the events of January 6 is exactly what the doctor ordered. We have to investigate, expose, and report on the truth. We need to establish a trusted record of what really transpired on January 6 and the events that preceded it. That is what this Commission is designed to do in a bipartisan, straight-down-the-middle manner.

Now, I have gone through all the silly excuses that we have heard from our Republican colleagues about why the Commission isn't needed or is too early or will go on for too long or needs to be modeled after the 9/11 Commission, even though it already is. The truth of the matter seems to be that Senate Republicans oppose the Commission because they fear that it might upset Donald Trump and their party's midterm messaging.

I am not speculating. It was reported in *POLITICO* yesterday that the Senate Republican leader warned his Conference that a January 6 Commission could hurt the Republicans politically.

Well, too bad. This is too important.

For the sake of Americans' faith in our democracy, there must be a full, thorough, and trusted account of what happened on January 6. Senate Republicans must decide if they are on the side of truth or on the side of Donald Trump's Big Lie.

I yield the floor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to executive session to consider the following nomination: Calendar No. 135; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The nomination considered and confirmed is as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

Christine Elizabeth Wormuth, of Virginia, to be Secretary of the Army, vice Ryan McCarthy.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Senate will now resume legislative session.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Mr. McCONNELL. Madam President, from coast to coast, American families are facing an explosion of violent crime on their streets and in their neighborhoods. The year 2020 saw homicides skyrocket nationwide—the sharpest 1-year increase in decades—and 2021 is already shaping up to be even worse.

Last year, Seattle saw a 61-percent increase in murders citywide. In 2020, Minneapolis saw homicides hit levels not seen since the 1990s, and, so far, 2021 is about doubling last year's pace. Here in Washington, DC, 2020 saw homicides hit a 16-year high, and, again, 2021 is already on an even worse trajectory. The situation is devolving all across the country. In my hometown of Louisville, as one report put it: "[T]he number of slayings in 2020 dwarf[ed] anything Louisville has seen—obliterating the previous record."